

The Context for the MIOCR Data Collection Effort. . .

In appropriating funds for the current MIOCR grants, the Legislature stipulated that they must be consistent with the intent and purpose of SB 1485, an initiative that sought to determine what works in reducing crime, jail days and criminal justice costs associated with adult mentally ill offenders. In a nutshell, the CSA's evaluation of that 1998 initiative showed that the provision of appropriate mental health and support services reduces the involvement of mentally ill persons in the justice system. Although the Legislature did not require an evaluation of the new MIOCR grant program (Chapter 48, Statutes of 2006), the CSA is committed to assessing the overall effectiveness of the funded projects on curbing recidivism among offenders with mental illness – both adults and juveniles – and sharing findings with all interested parties.

Toward this end, the CSA is requiring grantees to collect and report data, on a monthly basis, that will enable staff to describe the populations served by the projects and to assess their impact through aggregated “before and after program enrollment” comparisons on key outcome variables related to recidivism (e.g., bookings and petitions filed, days in jail/juvenile hall) and client functioning (e.g., housing status and hospitalizations).

By design, all of the funded projects are anchored in an evidence-based model that has proved effective in reducing the involvement of the target population in the justice system. Therefore, CSA staff anticipates differences in the desired direction on pre- and post-enrollment indicators. The findings to date, although very preliminary, indicate that the MIOCR projects are achieving the desired goal of helping keep mentally ill offenders from further involvement in the justice system through the provision of mental health treatment and support services.

The findings in this first MIOCR Data Supplement are based on seven months of data (February through August 2007) reported by 16 of the 22 adult MIOCR grantees and 13 of the 22 juvenile MIOCR grantees; the remaining grantees either have not begun enrolling participants or have not yet reported data to the CSA.

Findings for the Adult MIOCR Projects. . .

The 16 projects included in this summary have reported enrolling a total of 284 participants. Of these participants, 195 are male and 89 are female. Over 90% of these participants have co-occurring disorders – i.e., a diagnosis of mental illness along with a substance abuse disorder. Charts 1 and 2 display the age and ethnicity of these participants.

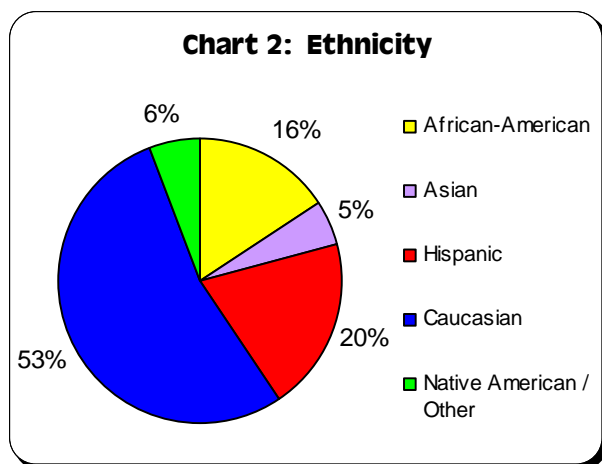
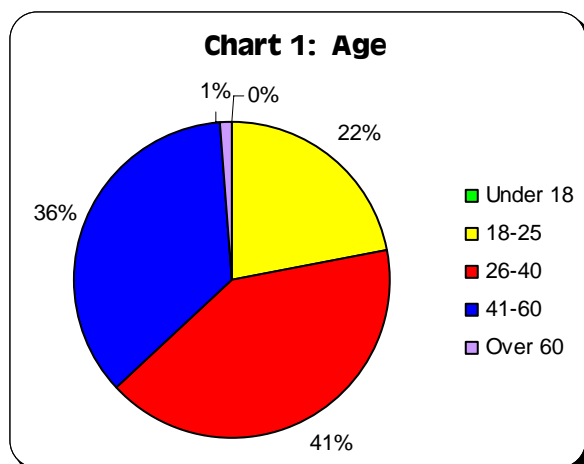
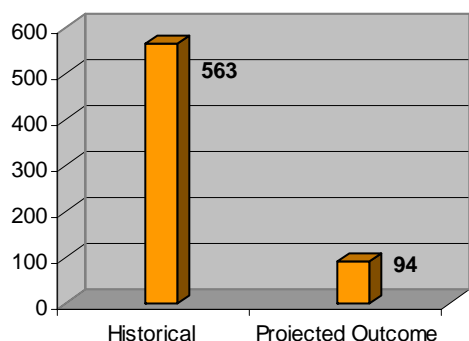


Chart 3: Bookings



The data submitted by grantees on criminal justice variable show that the enhanced treatment and support services offered through the MIOCR projects are making a positive difference. For example, during the 12 months prior to program enrollment (historical), the MIOCR participants had a total of 563 jail bookings. Through August, counties reported a total of 55 bookings for participants. If this trend continues, the projected outcome on bookings for a 12-month post-enrollment period would be 94 – which would translate into an 83% decrease in jail bookings. Chart 3 depicts this early result. Another desired outcome is a reduction in the severity of bookings offenses (i.e., misdemeanors rather than felonies). At this point, the outcome data indicate that the percentage of bookings for felonies may be higher in the 12-month post-enrollment period than the 12-month historical period. However, CSA staff believes these preliminary results are due

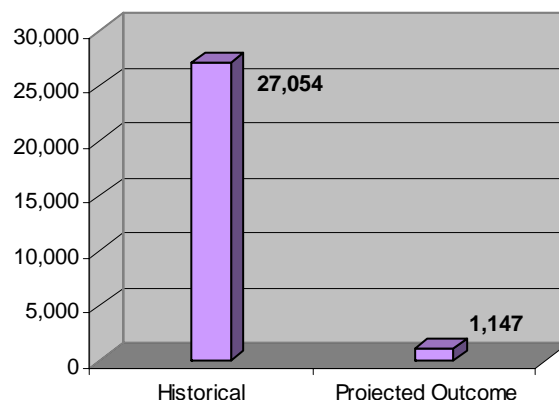
to the high number of post-enrollment felony bookings reported by one county (half of the total).

As depicted in Chart 4, the early results on the impact of the MIOCR projects on jail days are also promising – with a projected decrease of 96% based on the trend to date.

In terms of quality of life outcomes, the data indicate that the projects could have a significant impact on homelessness. For example, 40% of the participants reported being homeless for a total of 16,049 days during the 12 months preceding enrollment in the MIOCR projects. In contrast, only 7% of the participants reported being homeless for a total of 990 days in the seven-months since enrollment. The projected outcomes if these data trends continue would mean a 71% decrease in the number of homeless participants and an 89% decrease in homeless days.

While the aggregated data do not yet show an increase in the number of participants receiving Supplemental Security Income, which is often the only source of financial support for people who suffer a serious mental illness, these federal disability benefits are almost always suspended or terminated while a person is in jail – and the process for reinstating benefits after an offender is released typically takes several months. The process for initiating benefits is also time-consuming. For these reasons, CSA staff expects this outcome will change in the months ahead.

Chart 4: Jail Days



Marin County Puts a “Face” to the Numbers

“Hank” is a 55-year-old male diagnosed with Major Depression, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, and Alcohol Dependence. Over the years, Hank has had unsuccessful attempts with rehab, has had sporadic employment, experienced a failed marriage and lost contact with his children. Prior to the STAR (Support and Treatment After Release) program, Hank had been homeless for 10 years, had a history of at least 35 arrests and had multiple contacts with the Marin County mental health system.

In February 2007, Hank enrolled in the STAR Program/STAR Court. He was quickly assisted into a local sober living environment and immersed himself in all that the STAR Program had to offer. Recently, the STAR team assisted Hank in obtaining part-time employment, including enrollment in a culinary chef preparatory course, and he is currently working toward an independent living situation.

Today, Hank looks good - he's clean-cut and has a new lightness about him - and has been able to make contact with his ex-wife and his (now teenage) children. Overall, Hank says that he's come too far...experienced and healed too much...turned his life around too far to imagine himself ever being back where he was before he and the STAR Program crossed paths.

Findings for the Juvenile MIOCR Projects. . .

The 13 projects included in this summary have reported data on a total of 208 participants. Of these participants, 162 are male and 46 are female. Almost a third (29%) has a co-occurring mental illness substance abuse disorder and nearly three quarters (72%) of the participants are 15-17 years old.

As depicted in Chart 5, the juvenile MIOCR projects are serving an ethnically diverse population of offenders in need of mental health services. To their credit, the projects are committed to ensuring that participants and their families receive culturally appropriate interventions from culturally competent staff. In addition, a few of the grantees have integrated their MIOCR projects into the county's already existing effort to reduce disproportionate minority contact with the juvenile justice system.

Chart 5: Ethnicity

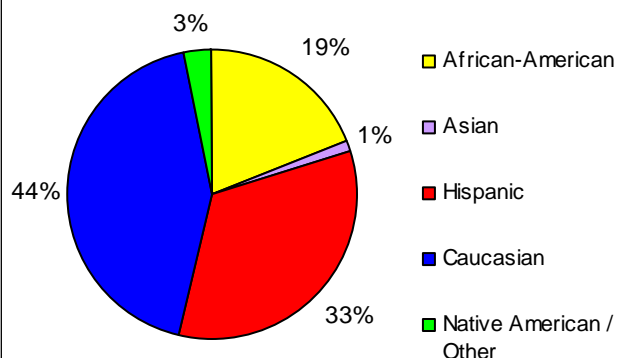
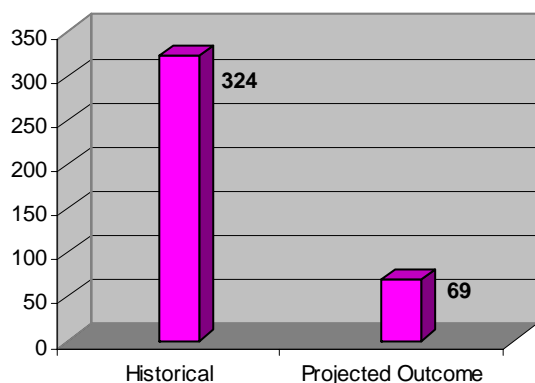


Chart 6: Petitions Filed

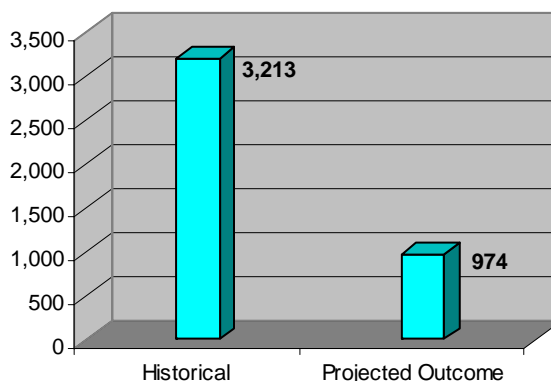


In terms of juvenile justice outcomes, the preliminary data indicate very promising results with respect to the total number of petitions filed by the District Attorney to initiate court action for a case. The historical data show that a total of 324 petitions were filed for the 208 program participants. Counties reported that only 40 petitions were filed against participants in the seven months since program enrollment, translating to a projected outcome of 69 petitions over a 12-month period (see Chart 6). If the current trend continues, this would mean a 79% decrease in petitions filed. The outcome data to date also indicate the possibility of a sizeable decrease in the number of petitions filed for a felony versus a misdemeanor. The same trends appear to be forming with respect to the number and type of petitions sustained by the juvenile court.

Another key juvenile justice variable is the number of days youthful offenders are detained in a county juvenile hall, ranch or camp. Based on historical and projected outcome data, there would be a 21% reduction in the number of participants committed to local juvenile corrections facilities. In addition, as depicted in Chart 7, if current trends continue, there would be a 70% reduction in the number of days participants are detained.

The CSA is looking at other outcome variables, including out-of-home placements and school attendance, but there are insufficient data at this point to analyze. While the same holds true for psychiatric hospitalizations, it should be noted that out of 208 participants, only two have been hospitalized since enrollment (compared to 20 who were hospitalized in the prior 12 months).

Chart 7: Days Detained



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